

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 10229

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XA, NI, CU, UR, ET, SO
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN VIEWS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA AND CUBAN PRESENCE

SUMMARY: IN TOUR D'HORIZON OF AFRICAN POLITICAL SCENE,
MEA AMERICAS DIRECTOR (MUSA) NOTED THAT FONMIN GARBA
HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN TO CUBANS OVER THEIR INVOLVEMENT
IN AFRICA. MUSA ALSO IMPLIED SOUTHERN AFRICA IS
TOUCHSTONE OF US/NIGERIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AT CONCLUSION OF SEPTEMBER 1 MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN
FOWLER ON POSSIBLE NIGERIAN PARTICIPATION IN ACYPL
EXCHANGE, MEA AMERICAS DIRECTOR MUSA INITIATED GENERAL
DISCUSSION OF AFRICAN PROBLEMS WITH EMPHASIS ON US/
NIGERIAN RELATIONS IN CONTEXT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.
FOLLOWING POINTS WERE COVERED:

-- SUPER POWER INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA. MUSA SAID
IDEALLY NIGERIA WOULD PREFER A MINIMUM OF SUCH INVOLVEMENT
IN AFRICAN POLITICS. HOWEVER, REAL WORLD DID NOT ALLOW
THAT. NEVERTHELESS, NIGERIAN POLICY WAS AIMED IN THAT
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DIRECTION. IN THAT CONTEXT MUSA NOTED HE HAD SAT IN
ON MEETING BETWEEN FONMIN GARBA AND CUBAN FONMIN DURING
RECENT ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE. GARBA TOLD CUBANS
THAT AS MUCH AS NIGERIA APPRECIATED CUBAN ASSISTANCE TO
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, FMG HOPED CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA
WOULD ONLY BE TEMPORARY AND NOT PERMANENT. MUSA
SAID THAT GARBA WAS REFERRING TO CUBAN PRESENCE EVERYWHERE

IN AFRICA INCLUDING ANGOLA AND ETHIOPIA. GARBA EXPRESSED HOPE IN PARTICULAR THAT CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA WILL DIMINISH AS SITUATION CALMS DOWN. MUSA REPORTED THAT CUBAN FONMIN SHOWED UNDERSTANDING OF GARBA'S STATEMENT BUT DID NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY OTHER THAN SAYING POINT WAS TAKEN. MUSA ADDED GARBA'S STATEMENT TO CUBANS ACTUALLY NOT IN CONTRADICTION TO STATED NATURE OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA WHICH CUBANS THEMSELVES DESCRIBE AS TEMPOARY. NEVERTHELESS, MUSA ADDED, THE MESSAGE EOT ACROSS TO CUBANS.

-- THE HORN. MUSA COMMENTED THAT NIGERIA' POSITION ON PROBLEMS IN THE HORN WAS OAU POSITION, NAMELY THAT AFRICAN BOUNDARIES SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED DESPITE FACT THEY WERE DRAWN BY COLONIAL POWERS. IN THAT REGARD, HE REFERRED TO NIGERIA'S BOUNDARIES WITH NIGER AND CAMEROON AS ILLOGICAL BUT NIGERIA ACCEPTS THEM. HE NOTED THAT SOMALIA HAS NO SUPPORT IN OAU FOR ITS CLAIM TO BE SPECIAL CASE RESULTING FROM DIVISION OF COUNTRY BY COLONIALISTS. MUSA RESPONDED PASSIVELY TO FOWLER INQUIRY ABOUT NIGERIAN REACTION TO POSSIBLE U.S. ARMS SHIPMENTS TO SOMALIA NOTING THAT NIGERIA OPPOSED SUPER POWERS' ARMS SHIPMENTS INTO AFRICAN TROUBLE SPOTS BUT REALIZED REALISTICALLY IT HAD LITTLE INFLUENCE IN SUCH MATTERS.

-- SOUTHERN AFRICA. MUSA ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY HOPE OF A CHANGE IN USG POLICY, PARTICULARLY TOWARD

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SOUTH AFRICA, FROM VERBAL COMMITMENT TO REAL SUPPORT FOR END OF APARTHEID. HE CITED PARTICULARLY U.S. TRADE AND ECONOMIC INVESTMENT IN SA. FOWLER RESPONDED THAT BUILDING CONSENSUS IN U.S. PUBLIC AGAINST SA WAS SLOW PROCESS. IN ANY CASE, HE PERSONALLY OPPOSED USE OF VIOLENCE. IN REPLY, MUSA SAID PUBLIC STAND OF U.S. AGAINST VIOLENCE GIVES RACISTS IN SA CARTE BLANCHE IN DEALING WITH SA BLACKS AND MAINTAINING APARTHEID. MUSA ADDED THAT AFRICANS WOULD SOON LOSE FAITH IN NEW U.S. POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION IF NOTHING IS DONE. MUSA COMMENTED THAT AFRICANS HAVE HAD ENOUGH WITH SA. THEIR PATIENCE HAS RUN OUT. EVERY DAY THE APARTHEID REGIME CONTINUES IN SA IS A DAY TOO LONG.

2. COMMENT: MUSA CLEARLY WAS TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE US IMPRESSION THAT, AS FAR AS NIGERIA CONCERNED, NEW U.S. APPROACH TO SOUTHERN AFRICA MUST PRODUCE TANGIBLE RESULTS SOON OR CLIMATE OF US/NIGERIAN BILATERIAL RELATIONS WILL BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

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